<u>REMARKS</u>

Claims 1-16, 20, 21, 29 and 55 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 29 and 55 are amended as shown on pp. 2-5 herein. Applicants' representative thanks Examiner for courtesies extended during a telephonic interview on September 22, 2007. During the interview, it was indicated that the above amendments may produce allowable subject matter.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I.   Rejection of Claims 1-16, 20-21, 29 and 55 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-16, 20, 21, 29 and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heckerman *et al.* (Inferring Informational Goals from Free-Text Queries: A Bayesian Approach) in view of Marcus (U.S. 6,032,156). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Heckerman *et al.*, alone or in combination with Marcus, does not teach or suggest each and every limitation of applicants' claimed invention.

Applicants' claimed invention relates to information retrieval, and more particularly to predicting high-level informational goals and the appropriate level of detail for an answer from observable linguistic features in queries. Additionally, the appropriate level of detail for an answer may depend on the application employed by the user. To this end, amended independent claim 1 (and similarly independent claims 29 and 55) recites *an inference engine that infers one or more informational goals based, at least in part, on at least one of the parsed query, the extrinsic data and an inference data stored in the inference model, the inference engine further* ***inferring one or more preferred levels of detail for an answer based on an application being employed by the user***. Heckerman *et al.*, alone or in combination with Marcus, does not teach or suggest such claimed aspects.

Heckerman *et al.* relates to a Bayesian approach to modeling the relationship between words in a user's query for assistance and the informational goals of the user. The cited reference further discloses analyzing a user query to infer a probability distribution over a set of user goals. Examiner concedes Heckerman *et al.* fails to disclose or suggest inferring a level of detail for an answer based on an application being employed by the user (*See* Office Action dated July 11, 2007, pg. 3), and offers Marcus to cure these deficiencies.

Generally, Marcus relates to a system that holds information regarding media elements in a database. The database is organized in a hierarchical fashion, where different types of information are layered within the database. One of the layers, the template layer, contains information that describes the range of the target audience. The information contained within the template layer relates strictly to demographic information, such as gender and age group criteria (*See* Col. 4, ll. 4-21). The media information can then be targeted, upon the execution of a query, based on the user's demographic characteristics. This is distinctly and materially different from the claimed subject matter, which infers a level of detail based on *an application* being employed by a user. Consequently, Marcus fails to disclose or suggest **inferring one or more preferred levels of detail for an answer based on an application being employed by the user**, as claimed.

In view of the foregoing, it is readily apparent that Marcus fails to remedy the admitted deficiencies of Heckerman *et al.* with respect to independent claims 1, 29 and 55. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 29 and 55, and associated dependent claims 2-16 and 20-21, should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP215US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

AMIN, TUROCY & CALVIN, LLP

/Himanshu S. Amin/
Himanshu S. Amin
Reg. No. 40,894

AMIN, TUROCY & CALVIN, LLP
24TH Floor, National City Center
1900 E. 9TH Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
Telephone (216) 696-8730
Facsimile (216) 696-8731